

Message Text

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45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 IGA-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 EB-11 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 DRC-01 /158 W

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R 161515Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 906

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0070

BEIRUT PASS DAMASCUS AND BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNITY

REF: TRIPOLI 48 AND 47

1. SUMMARY: WE BELIEVE THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFER-
ENCES WITHIN RCC ON LIBYAN UNION WITH TUNISIA. MANY LIBYANS
ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT REALITY OF PROJECT BUT THERE ARE NO
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SPECIAL INTERNAL PRESSURES ON GOVT. MASMOUDI'S DISMISSAL

DID NOT SIT WELL WITH LARG. TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR WORRIED THAT IF QADHAFI TAKES BADLY TUNISIA'S SLOWING OF PACE TOWARD UNION, HE MIGHT SEEK WAYS TO PUT PRESSURE ON GOT. END SUMMARY.

2. RCC'S SMALL MEMBERSHIP IS MOST SECRETIVE ABOUT ITS DELIBERATIONS AND INTENTIONS, AND GOOD INFO ON WHAT THEY ARE UP TO IS RARE. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO REASON TO THINK THERE IS ANY SIGNIFICANT DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS AMONG THE YOUNG OFFICERS ON ISSUE OF UNION WITH TUNISIA. COLONEL QADHAFI IS SO CLEARLY THE DOMINANT FIGURE THAT OTHERS FOLLOW WHEN HE MAKES UP HIS MIND. ACCORDING TO ONE ARAB AMBASSADOR HERE, QADHAFI PHONED PRIMIN MAJOR JALLUD FROM JERBA SHORTLY BEFORE AGREEING ON UNION TO TELL HIM WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO. "GOOD LUCK," WAS THE REPLY.

3. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM AMONG LIBYA'S PEOPLE ABOUT REALITIES OF QADHAFI'S COUP DE THEATRE. ONE WILL HEAR OCCASIONAL LIBYAN BLURT OUT OPINION THAT QADHAFI IS CRAZY. NEVERTHELESS, UNLIKE IN TUNISIA, THERE SEEMS TO BE NO SPECIAL PRESSURE FOR GOVT EXPLANATIONS ABOUT THIS MAJOR STEP WHICH HAS BEEN TAKEN. IT WAS THOUGHT QADHAFI MIGHT SPEAK TO HIS COUNTRYMEN WHEN HE RETURNED IN TRIUMPH FROM JERBA. THIS HAS NOT YET HAPPENED, AND LIBYA'S DOUR AND RESERVED PEOPLE ARE GOING ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AS USUAL.

4. TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR FEZZANI, ANOTHER WELL PLACED OFFICIAL WHO WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE BY JAN. 12 ANNOUNCEMENT, IS APPREHENSIVE ABOUT QADHAFI'S REACTION TO TUNISIA'S SLOWING DOWN PACE TOWARD GOAL OF UNION. FEZZANI SAID MASMOUDI'S DISMISSAL DID NOT SIT WELL WITH TRIPOLI. HE IS ANXIOUS TO KNOW WHAT RCC MEMBER MAJOR HUMAIDI IS REPORTING TO HIS COLLEAGUES FOLLOWING HIS DISCUSSIONS IN TUNIS. IF QADHAFI TAKES THE SLOW-DOWN BADLY, FEZZANI IS AFRAID THERE MIGHT BE PRESSURES AGAINST THE THIRTY THOUSAND TUNISIANS WORKING IN LIBYA, AND PERHAPS PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST HIM AND HIS EMBASSY. SPEAKING NERVOUSLY FOR HOUR TO CHARGE HE POURED OUT HIS WORRIES. PLEASE PROTECT HIS CONFIDENCES. LIBYAN PRESS NOTED YESTERDAY THAT BOURGUIBA HAD RECEIVED AMERICAN AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS (TUNIS 206). CHARGE CLARIFIED FOR FEZZANI THAT MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR SEELYE WAS AT BOURGUIBA'S REQUEST.

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NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED DAMASCUS OR BAGHDAD.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FEDERATION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, MEMBERSHIP, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TRIPOL00070
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740137/aaaabilf.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TRIPOLI 48 AND 47
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <30-Sep-2002 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNITY
TAGS: PFOR, LY, TS, (QADHAFI, MUHAMMAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005